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Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mrs. BEKOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In the general debate in the First Committee virtually all delegations have shown clearly that the problem of a complete and general nuclear-test ban is not merely urgent but demands immediate solution. The position of the Soviet Union on the question of a nuclear-test ban has already been expressed at the current session of the General Assembly in the statement of the Chairman of the Soviet delegation and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Mr. Shevardnadze, in the plenary meeting and that of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Petrovsky, in the First Committee. The essence of that position is perfectly clear: the USSR resolutely champions the complete banning of nuclear tests and is exerting every effort to ensure that that objective is achieved within the shortest possible time. The position of the USSR Government on this question is an expression of the insistent demands of the Soviet people. It is no accident that the nuclear-testing programme in our country has been reviewed and that since last October the Soviet nuclear ranges have been silent.

To attain its objective the Soviet Union is ready to utilize all available means and methods, including all the possibilities inherent in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the conference to be held in January 1991 for the amendment of the 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear testing in three environments, and the Soviet-American bilateral talks on that subject. It is most important to ensure forward movement, with no stagnation or unjustified delays.

The problem of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing long ago became a problem of the survival of mankind. Its solution requires the joint efforts of the

(Mrs. Bekova, USSR)

entire international community, of parliamentarians, the public and, unquestionably, the United Nations. For me, as a member of the Government of the Kazakh SSR, on whose territory lies the Semipalatinsk nuclear-testing range, the issue has particular relevance and is fully appreciated. Kazakhstan, unfortunately, has had direct experience of what is involved. During the 40 years of testing at the Semipalatinsk range, nuclear devices a thousand times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima have been exploded. Furthermore, prior to 1963 many of those tests were carried out in the open. All this has done incalculable damage to the health of the people, to the environment and to the economy of the nearby territories. I express full solidarity with representatives of States who have spoken in the First Committee of the inhumane nature of nuclear testing and the real danger it poses to the health of people and the environment.

In recent years, together with the development in our country of the process of democratization and glasnost, there has emerged in Kazakhstan and throughout the country a strong popular movement in favour of the immediate halting of nuclear tests and the closing of nuclear ranges. Kazakhstan was the birthplace of the powerful movement known as Nevada-Semipalatinsk, whose activities have been widely recognized not only in our country but also abroad.

It is symbolic that the powerful voice of the world public in support of demands for the immediate halting of nuclear testing was sounded in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, at an international congress under the slogan "World electorate against nuclear weapons" held there last May. That congress was attended not only by eminent representatives of the peoples of many countries but also by military personnel, diplomats, doctors and nuclear physicists. Such forums not only give a marked impetus to efforts to ensure the cessation of nuclear testing but also make it possible to understand better the arguments of both the

(Mrs. Bekova, USSR)

opponents and the advocates of nuclear testing, so that a consensus can be reached among all mankind. It was no accident that one result of the congress was a joint appeal by the participants to the leaders of the nuclear States to halt nuclear-weapon testing immediately.

Today, when the world community is entering the post-confrontational era, the cold war is fading into the past and the balance of terror is being replaced by a balance of co-operation and interaction, the task of ending nuclear testing assumes a global dimension encompassing all humanity. That is why on 9 October, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in connection with the ratification of the Soviet-American Treaties on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear-Weapons Tests and on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, adopted an address to parliaments and the world public stressing that the USSR is ready to turn its moratorium on nuclear testing into a definite and final cessation of such tests if the Government of the United States, either unilaterally or on a basis of reciprocity, will end its own nuclear-testing programmes. Confirming its proposal regarding global nuclear disarmament, the USSR expressed its readiness to become a non-nuclear-weapon State if the other nuclear States will do the same. The address contains an appeal for the immediate ending of nuclear testing and for the holding of a parliamentary referendum to that end. We hope that the parliaments and public of all countries of the world will respond in the immediate future to this appeal by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and that this initiative of the Soviet legislators will be reflected in one of the resolutions on the ending of nuclear testing to be adopted at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Kazakhstan has already made its own choice in favour of the immediate cessation of nuclear testing and the closing of testing ranges. Specific steps in that direction are being taken by the President of the Kazakh SSR, Mr. Nazarbayev,

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the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the Republic. At its very first session, the new Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR adopted a decree supporting the people's demand for the immediate ending of nuclear-weapon testing in its territory. The declaration of the State sovereignty of the Kazakh SSR under discussion at the present time at the second session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR includes an article banning the production, stockpiling and testing of nuclear weapons on the Republic's territory. The people of Kazakhstan are resolutely opposed to the transfer of the nuclear-weapon-test programme to the territory of any other Republic of the USSR.

On 19 October 1989 the last nuclear-weapon test at the Semipalatinsk range was carried out. We express our conviction that that date will signify an end to nuclear testing in the USSR. We call upon the other nuclear-weapon States to turn the dark page of history linked to nuclear-weapon testing.

Mr. N'DIAYE (Mali) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation, I should like first to congratulate you warmly, Sir, upon your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. My delegation respects you for your personal qualities and talents and assures you of its total support in the discharge of your duties.

The multidimensional change in the contemporary world, which has affected the most solidly grounded certainties, shaken ideologies, brought about the downfall of dictatorships, awakened peoples and led to their democratic uprising, is the clearest sign of the passage from an old world dominated by the spirit of war and the desire for power to a new world, which I hope will be marked by a spirit of freedom, democracy and peace.

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(Mr. N'Diaye, Mali)

One of the most decisive aspects of this change will doubtless be the remoulding of military doctrines and blocs. We are pleased to note that, despite some reluctance, there has been a gradual change from the doctrine of deterrence towards a doctrine of collective security. The disarmament negotiations between the two super-Powers and the encouraging results achieved - particularly the sizeable reductions in offensive strategic nuclear forces - augur well for constructive co-operation, which will guarantee peace and security for all the peoples of the world.

The positive side of the disarmament process must none the less not lead us to forget that there are still many obstacles in the way of general and complete disarmament. In fact, qualitative improvements in arms systems are continuing despite the cessation in quantitative increase. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and their dissemination throughout the world continue to be matters of deep concern. The question of the cessation of nuclear tests is still very controversial and those who have nuclear weapons for the most part reject the cessation of nuclear testing. Naval nuclear weapons escape the disarmament process. International arms transfers are not controlled and continue to ravage Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. Non-nuclear-weapon States have no real guarantees against a possible nuclear war and, finally, the most important legal instruments in the disarmament sphere - such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons - have not been signed or, if they have been, some of the signatories do not comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards provided for in the Treaties themselves.

Mali, in its pursuit of world peace, has always advocated realistic action that would take account of the interests of all States. In this connection, we have signed and ratified all of the legal instruments banning nuclear tests and prohibiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. While we congratulate the Soviet

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Union and the United States for the progress achieved in the negotiations on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and their willingness to move progressively towards the complete cessation of nuclear tests, my delegation considers that, at the present level of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons, a total ban on tests is an absolute necessity. The degree of credibility of deterrence should be measured by the degree of confidence and transparency in international relations, rather than by the vicious circle of constant qualitative improvement. The idea of an amendment conference, to be held in New York in January 1991, to transform the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water into a treaty banning all nuclear testing should make it possible to achieve concrete implementation of the common desire for peace.

Here, I should like to welcome the decision taken by the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban after a seven-year interruption in its work. In studying the problems related to the halting of nuclear tests and their impact on politics, the economy and the defence of States, that Committee will certainly make it possible to overcome any reluctance.

The non-proliferation Treaty is an essential instrument in the policy of disarmament. States that are not yet party to it must adhere to it so that the extension conference to be held in 1995 will ensure by a broad consensus that it will continue in force. The "threshold" States must also be covered by this Treaty even if they are only interested by the peaceful aspects of nuclear technology. But beforehand, the United Nations must work to narrow the gap that exists between the viewpoints of the major nuclear Powers, since - as has been indicated by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs - "global efforts for nuclear non-proliferation have been enmeshed in a dispute over a comprehensive test ban". (A/C.1/45/PV.3, p. 56)

(Mr. N'Diaye, Mali)

We regret the inability of the most recent Conference on Disarmament to conclude a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. Mali hopes that the mobilization of the political will of the various parties will achieve chemical disarmament in the interest of collective security.

These negotiations are of paramount importance for Africa, which is entirely unarmed in the face of chemical aggression and of a South Africa that possesses the technical means to manufacture nuclear weapons and is not yet covered by the non-proliferation Treaty.

Africa must remain a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Similarly, international transfers of conventional weapons remains a matter of constant concern for Africa because of successive political ravages and destabilization. There have been thousands of victims of the use of conventional weapons and massive destruction in Africa, Asia and Latin America while the high level of arms in some regions keeps them in a constant state of tension. In other words, arms transfers have become intolerable and must be dealt with within the framework of the negotiations on disarmament with a view to ensuring regulation of the production of conventional weapons and a limitation on their transfers. A system could be set up to publicize weapons sales and an international monitoring body could be set up under the aegis of the United Nations to ensure the transparency of transfers. But the limitation of transfers must go hand in hand with the implementation of a system to protect non-manufacturing States, which must use the means of arms transfers to guarantee their independence and sovereignty.

If we do not wish disarmament to be a "sonorous nothing", to paraphrase Metternich, it is of the utmost importance that we find ways and means of directing towards development a considerable part of the resources that will be released through disarmament measures. In this connection, negotiations must be undertaken

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to deal with restructuring, under-employment and reductions in salaries resulting from the breaking of military contacts with the weapons industries in the developed countries, on the one hand, and, on the other, with the creation of an international disarmament fund, which has long been called for by the countries of the South. Its funds should make it possible to relieve the international debt and launch lasting growth and sustained development.

My delegation encourages the studies on the conversion and adaptation of military industries into civilian industries currently being conducted by the United Nations. By taking development into account in the disarmament process, it would be possible to eliminate the causes of insecurity and poverty and to create the conditions for a lasting peace and harmonious evolution in the world.

For this, the role of the United Nations in multilateral disarmament monitoring must be reinforced in order that it may be able to meet new challenges.

The hope created by the new climate in co-operation must not be dimmed by a psychosis of insecurity and national selfishness that belong to an old world. Can the industrialized countries, after such daring and intellectual prowess in invention, be daunted by the greatest intellectual and moral challenge facing mankind - that is, movement from a spirit of war to a spirit of peace and fraternity? We venture to believe and hope that accelerated negotiations will make it possible to achieve the various conventions on disarmament so patiently awaited by the peoples of the world.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): May I, at the outset, convey to you, Sir, our felicitations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Your vast knowledge and experience will play an important role in guiding the deliberations of our Committee, and I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to assure you of our full support and co-operation.

Significant and important developments are taking place in the world today. The cold war has virtually come to an end, and East-West rivalry is being replaced by a spirit of co-operation and understanding. There is renewed hope and expectation as the two major nuclear Powers continue their disarmament negotiations. The recent changes that have taken place in Europe augur well for an early conclusion of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process. Yet, against the backdrop of these major changes, which imbue a sense of hope for real peace and disarmament, we see the recrudescence of tensions as a result of regional problems that have remained unresolved over a long period.

An important dimension of the global-security environment lies in the danger posed to the security of smaller States by the militarization and aggressive postures of larger States, aimed at exercising regional domination and hegemony.

While a global response to disarmament is most commendable, a collective endeavour by countries at the regional level to promote disarmament and to enhance security at the lowest possible levels of armaments is an indispensable corollary of their advocacy of global disarmament. We believe that a regional approach would effectively promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and would strenghten the security of smaller countries, thus contributing to international peace and security. The global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other and can therefore be pursued simultaneously.

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

We believe that the following steps should be taken to promote the regional approach to disarmament.

First, the United Nations should continue to lend its support to the evolution of confidence-building measures at the regional level. Initiatives by regional States in this field, as well as for disarmament, non-proliferation and security, should be encouraged and supported.

Secondly, outstanding differences and disputes between regional States should be resolved by peaceful means in order to promote the process of regional disarmament.

Thirdly, agreements should be concluded for mutual restraint in arms acquisitions, whether through international transfers or by way of indigenous production. Policies of interference, intervention, domination, coercion or the use or threat of the use of force in any form whatsoever should be renounced.

Fourthly, regional States should endeavour to establish a mutually acceptable military equilibrium between themselves. The measures to create a regional balance could include the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones; the renunciation of the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, radiological weapons and certain types of advanced weapons; and agreed ceilings on armed forces, conventional weapons and military expenditure.

Fifthly, institutions and mechanisms should be created than can facilitate disarmament and security initiatives at the regional level.

Sixthly, once a degree of mutual confidence has been achieved, the regional States may evolve joint and co-ordinated positions regarding external threats to the region, including the presence of foreign forces in the vicinity.

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

Finally, a fresh United Nations study should be conducted by the Secretary-General, with the help of a group of governmental experts, on the regional approach to disarmament, specifically analysing threats to the security of small States and suggesting remedial measures.

A treaty prohibiting all nuclear-test explosions by all countries, in all environments, for all time, is long overdue. The central importance of a nuclear-test-ban treaty for non-proliferation has been fully recognized. The conclusion of such a treaty must not be delayed any further. A test-ban treaty would make an effective contribution towards halting the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and preventing their proliferation.

Every possible benefit needs to be derived from the constructive and positive developments in the super-Powers' relationship in order to evolve an agreement banning all forms of nuclear-weapons testing for all time. It is vital that efforts that will lead ultimately to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and of their delivery systems be continued and accelerated. Given the necessary political will, problems of a technical nature would not pose insurmountable obstacles to the conclusion of disarmament agreements. Pakistan has lent its support to the initiative to convert the Partial Test Ban Treaty into a comprehensive test ban treaty, and we welcome the decision to convene the Amendment Conference. The response of the nuclear-weapon States would be a litmus test of their intentions.

Pakistan has reaffirmed time and again, at the highest level, its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. This commitment has been demonstrated repeatedly through initiatives, both at the global and at the regional levels, aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Our resolute support for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the various parts of the world is well known. In the final document of the First Special Session on Disarmament the

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

creation of such zones is recognized as an important interim disarmament measure pending general and complete disarmament, which remains the ultimate goal of all States. Pakistan's proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia is designed to keep our region free of nuclear weapons and to promote the objectives of non-proliferation. Pakistan will submit this year, as it has done in previous years, a draft resolution on the subject along the lines of the resolution adopted at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. It is our hope that this draft resolution will get the same widespread support as similar resolutions have received in the past.

In our endeavours to strengthen the non-proliferation régime in the region, as well as in our initiative for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, we have made other concrete proposals. Our agreement with India not to attack each other's nuclear facilities is a small, yet significant, confidence-building measure, which we hope will lead to other, similar steps in the future. It is our firm belief that the poor majority of South Asia, who represent one fifth of the human race, cannot afford to waste their limited and precious resources pursuing the luxury of a futile nuclear race. For this reason we shall continue to persevere in initiatives that would keep our region free from nuclear weapons, and shall remain ready to convert the existing unilateral declarations into treaty obligations. We remain ready to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty simultaneously with India; to accept International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on our nuclear programme simultaneously with India; to conclude a bilateral agreement with India for the mutual inspection of each other's nuclear facilities; to make a joint declaration with India renouncing nuclear weapons; and to enter into a bilateral or regional nuclear-test-ban agreement with India.

Pakistan is ready to accept any equitable and non-discriminatory agreement, with effective verification arrangements, that would commit the countries of the

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

region, in a legally binding manner, not to acquire or produce nuclear weapons. Conscious of the important role that the United Nations has to play in the disarmament field, we have also proposed that, in order to explore the possibilities of such an agreement, a conference on nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia be convened under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the regional and other interested States.

For a long time the non-nuclear-weapon States have sought assurances against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has been in the forefront of this move, as we believe that the non-nuclear-weapon States that forgo the nuclear option are entitled, pending the elimination of nuclear weapons, to demand from the nuclear-weapon States security assurances against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons against them.

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

Progress on this issue has regrettably been stalled for some years, and we have not been able to move ahead after reaching a consensus on the common-formula approach. We are of the view that the deadlock could be broken if the concerned nuclear-weapon States were to review their policies and formulate revised positions so as to respond positively to the legitimate concerns of the non-nuclear-weapon States. My delegation has been submitting a draft resolution on this subject every year. Last year our draft resolution received overwhelming support. We intend to submit a draft resolution this year as well and hope that it will receive unanimous support in the Committee and in the General Assembly.

The negotiations on a chemical-weapons convention in Geneva are at a delicate stage. While it has been found possible to arrive at an agreement on a number of issues, certain areas of disagreement still remain. These would naturally be the focus of further negotiations. In our view, what is required for an early conclusion of the convention is some flexibility and a greater political and practical will on the part of certain States. What is not needed is any side-tracking towards partial or interim or discriminatory measures or any retrogressive definition of the scope of the convention. These can only stall the negotiations and delay their conclusion. We are convinced that with a concerted and sustained effort by all the participants in the negotiations a final text for the convention can be realized in the near future.

The regional approach offers more realistic prospects for success in the field of conventional disarmament as well. The aim of the regional disarmament process should be to establish a mutually acceptable military equilibrium among the regional States that ensures equal security for each of them. Steps to develop and create a regional balance could include the renunciation of certain types of advanced weapons, agreed ceilings on armed forces, elimination of the capability to

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launch surprise attacks, and geographical restrictions on the deployment of armed forces.

The United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament have provided an important platform for dialogue and an opportunity to identify areas of common approaches among the countries of the region and subregion.

Pakistan supports all efforts aimed at ensuring the equal and undiminished security of States at the lowest level of armaments and military expenditure. We also support efforts to ban the illegal transfer of arms and arms sales to drug barons and terrorist mercenaries. It must, however, be recognized that every country has the sovereign right to determine its own legitimate defence needs. The arms-exporting countries cannot assume this right as regards the arms-importing countries or non-weapon-producing countries. The question of arms transfers should therefore be considered within the over-all context of conventional arms control. We must bear in mind its other inseparable and integrally linked aspects, particularly the indigenous defence production capabilities of different States, as well as the legitimate security concerns of all.

Those aspects must be taken into account simultaneously and in an integrated manner. Many small and medium-sized States, lacking indigenous defence production capabilities have no choice but to rely upon the international transfer of arms to meet their essential security needs. In some cases they perceive threats to their security emanating from States with larger indigenous defence production capabilities. Obviously, the denial to such small and medium-sized States of the possibility of acquiring arms through international transfers would endanger their security and have a destabilizing effect on international peace and security. The international community must therefore guard against any attempts to isolate and highlight only one aspect of conventional arms control while ignoring these other important aspects.

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

The new threat of militarization of outer space has added yet another dimension to the problems of the arms race on Earth. The danger of deployment of weapons based in space or directed against objects in space or on Earth cannot be overstressed.

The increasing possibilities for military uses of outer space as a result of scientific and technical advances lead to the inevitable conclusion that the existing legal régime imposing some restrictions on the military uses of outer space is not enough to prevent an arms race in outer space. It is important to strengthen the existing legal norms and to supplement them with new rules so that outer space is reserved only for peaceful purposes. In this context, greater transparency in the activities of the space Powers would serve as an important confidence-building measure.

The use of space-based remote-sensing and surveillance techniques today offers a unique opportunity for disarmament agreements. This capability has remained the exclusive possesssion of a few technologically advanced States. We believe that these techniques should be made available to all countries on an equal and non-discriminatory basis through an appropriate international institution.

The escalation in the naval arms and armaments of some countries, both in quality and quantity, beyond the legitimate requirements of coastal defence, has caused smaller States to feel very insecure and threatened. The expansion and modernization of naval forces, combined with the increased sophistication of sea-based naval weapons systems, the deployment at sea of nuclear weapons, both strategic and tactical, and the introduction of nuclear-powered submarines into different regions of the world have given an alarming capability to the navies of a few States. Consequently, the security of small and medium-sized coastal States is now threatened from the sea on an unprecedented scale. The question of naval

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disarmament and the imposition of restrictions on the military uses of the high seas therefore deserve to be addressed urgently.

The relationship between disarmament and development has been clearly established and recognized by the United Nations. The recommendations adopted at the special session of the General Assembly on the relationship between disarmament and development have unfortunately not been implemented. It is a sad reflection on mankind that more money is spent on armaments each year while the developing countries continue to struggle with their international debt problems. How can we turn our eyes away from the plight of the majority of the world's population, which continues to exist at or below a basic subsistence level and suffers from hunger, disease and economic deprivation? It is towards these immediate problems that our energies and our efforts should be directed, and it is against this menace that our wars must be fought.*

Mr. RAKOTOZAFY (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): It is a pleasure for me to express to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Your unanimous election is a well-deserved tribute to your personal qualities and professional experience. We are convinced that under your guidance the work of the current session will reach a successful conclusion. We also wish to congratulate the other officers of the Committee.

The past year has been marked by developments of a scope one could not have imagined. The changes that have shaken the entire structure of the cold war have been felt throughout the world. New and promising trends in international relations have led us to feel a kind of euphoria and complacency.

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* Mr. Morris (Australia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Rakotozafy, Madagascar)

The relaxation of East-West tensions, symbolized by the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, has not only made possible the emergence of a new order in Europe, but also released the countries of the third world from problems resulting from the previous antagonism between the two super-Powers. The settlement or easing of some regional conflicts, which began within the United Nations, has enhanced the credibility of the Organization as an institution guaranteeing international peace. The new spirit of common endeavour and co-operation between nations, and in particular between the major Powers, is becoming stronger every day. All of these elements strengthen our view that a new, hopeful international order is being slowly but surely put in place.

However, the détente between the super-Powers cannot by itself solve the conflicts in various parts of the world. Despite the considerable improvement in the international political climate, many situations of contention remain. The persistence of tensions and conflicts of interest and the widening differences between North and South show the fragility of international security.

The tragic events in the Gulf, resulting from the inadmissible invasion of the State of Kuwait by Iraq; the explosive situation in the Middle East; the current stalemate in finding a final settlement of the question of Afghanistan; the stagnation in the negotiating process regarding the Cambodia conflict; the complexity of the problems of Western Sahara and Cyprus; and the absence of a lasting solution to the Korean question; these are all destabilizing elements which nullify the beneficial impact of the positive changes in international relations.

Similarly, international stability can be imperilled by non-military threats, such as the widening of the gap between the developed and developing countries, the constant worsening of the economic and social situation in most developing countries and the steady deterioration of the environment. Settling these

(Mr. Rakotozafy, Madagascar)

problems requires lasting and effective solutions within a very general framework based on a concerted, comprehensive approach.

The improved understanding between the two super-Powers makes it possible to glimpse opportunities for the control of weapons and for disarmament. For the first time in history some types of nuclear weapons have been destroyed. We welcomed the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, which is being implemented according to the agreed schedule. We are also encouraged by the fact that the strategic arms reduction Treaty is soon to be signed and by the commitment of the United States and the Soviet Union to continue negotiations on a considerable reduction of their strategic arsenals. We also welcome the bilateral agreement concluded last June on the non-production of chemical weapons and on the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles.

Those positive results in bilateral negotiations clearly demonstrate that effective, true disarmament is possible despite the complexity of the problems. This should give further encouragement to multilateral negotiations leading towards the speedy elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Unfortunately, the multilateral negotiations have not produced tangible and encouraging results, as can be seen in the failure of the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The lack of consensus on a final document at the end of the Conference's work points to the gaps in the current non-proliferation régime, which has been unable to prevent either a qualitative race or a vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. In order to enhance the credibility of the non-proliferation Treaty, States Parties must re-evaluate their positions before the convening of the 1995 Conference on extending the Treaty.

(Mr. Rakotozafy, Madagascar)

Ending nuclear tests remains one of the priorities of nuclear disarmament. Wide differences of view continue to block the negotiations on the question. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban will be re-established at the beginning of the 1991 session of the Conference. Moreover, we support the initiative of many States parties to the partial test-ban Treaty to convene a conference in January 1991 to turn that Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The establishment and consolidation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace in various parts of the world is the corollary of a credible régime of nuclear non-proliferation. We welcome the conclusions adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its last sssion on the nuclear capability of South Africa. The concrete measures advocated by the Commission in paragraph 10 of its recommendations will contribute to attaining the objectives of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted in 1964 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity.

However, we reject the false argument advanced by some that resolution 2832 (XXVI), Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, is obsolete. The convening soon of the Conference on the Indian Ocean, to be held in Colombo, would enable the States of the region, the major Powers and other maritime users to identify measures to enhance confidence and security in the region and establish machinery to implement the objectives of the Declaration.

The optimism generated by the results of the 1989 Paris Conference on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons was somewhat lessened this year at the Conference on Disarmament. In the light of the threat posed to humanity by the proliferation of those weapons, we call for the rapid conclusion of the convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. In order to unblock the negotiations, we would

(Mr. Rakotozafy, Madagascar)

support a proposal to convene a meeting of the Conference on Disarmament at ministerial level in 1991.

Conventional disarmament is also an important element in general and comprehensive disarmament. In order to facilitate the process of conventional disarmament, globally, regionally and subregionally, we must eliminate sources of tension and conflict. That would promote a reduction of military spending and of weapons purchases. The major Powers with the greatest and most sophisticated concentration of conventional weapons bear special responsibilities in this regard. Here we welcome the fact that agreements on a substantial reduction of conventional weapons in Europe are soon to be signed. But we hope that the countries of the South will not become dumps for the surplus weapons resulting from such agreements.

Moreover, the Secretary-General's proposal of an international register of arms transfers should be expanded to take into consideration the question of arms manufacture as well.

(Mr. Rakotozafy, Madagascar)

Today the world is at a crossroads. We are approaching a new era which we hope will be better than the present one. For a small country such as Madagascar, the United Nations remains the ideal forum in which to express our position on questions of disarmament and international security. We are seeing new prospects for international co-operation, thanks in large part to the renewed trust in multilateralism and the recognition of the central role of the United Nations in international affairs. This process must be consolidated with a view to ensuring broader participation by all Member States in multilateral disarmament efforts.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Let me first of all convey to the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Rana, my congratulations on his election; I also congratulate you, Sir, on your election to a vice-chairmanship. I take this opportunity also to thank the members of the First Committee for the honour and trust they have displayed towards my country and me by electing me a Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

It is no overstatement to say that novelty - at times astounding and beyond all expectations and forecasts - has become a determining factor in world events. That has been especially vivid during the past year in this watershed period of world politics. The walls that divided peoples for many long years are coming down; the trenches of the cold war are disappearing; the fog of bias, mistrust and enmity is dissipating. Everything from security issues to ecology and health is undergoing a major transformation.

It is difficult from the contemporaneous perspective to judge the scale of these changes; that is the prerogative of history. But there is a strong feeling that these are years of so great a qualitative transformation that it can be compared only with a very few breakthroughs in human history.

(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

In the most sensitive and fundamental sphere, that of security, we are witnessing a change in the fundamental constant of the earlier period: the threatening military confrontation of two Powers - the United States and the USSR. Major mutual steps have led to the possibility - and the actual start - of reductions in nuclear and conventional arms. The processes now under way are prompting us to rethink and rebuild the whole post-war strategic system. Old equations - military, political, economic, East-West, North-South and South-South - are cracking, as we can see every day on news programmes. The world is taking on a new quality.

My delegation hopes that this new atmosphere will bear fruit also in the work of the First Committee, which, as the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, has said, is holding its first post-cold-war session.

But the positive processes in the world stand in stark contrast to sudden and sad relapses - as in the Middle East - to actions bearing all the signs of long-gone political times. From this we learn - or ought to learn - that the emergence of the new on the global level, while it may have a solid objective foundation, is a subtle and delicate process that can be consolidated only by vigilant, caring and nurturing attention from all members of the world community without exception.

Byelorussia does not - and frankly cannot - stay on the sidelines in the major changes sweeping countries and whole continents. We too are taking on a new quality. Last July, the freely and democratically elected Parliament of the Republic adopted a document of fundamental importance to Byelorussia: the Declaration of State Sovereignty. The provisions of that Declaration are radically transforming many aspects of our life. Specifically, they spell out new goals in the area of Byelorussia's foreign policy.

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The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Byelorussia, Mr. V. Kebich, described the foreign policy aspects of the Declaration in his statement to the General Assembly on 26 September. Still, it is necessary and proper in today's statement to speak in somewhat greater detail of the new elements of the Declaration that have a direct bearing on the First Committee's area of competence.

In particular, Byelorussia set the goal in its Declaration of State Sovereignty of turning its territory into a nuclear-free zone and the Republic into a neutral State. Those foreign policy provisions are new to us; they both reflect and result from the events in our country and the processes now under way in the world. A major determining factor was the growing anti-nuclear sentiment of Byelorussian public opinion in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster. A significant role was played also by the shifting perception of security problems on the global and regional levels as a result of long-term efforts by the United Nations.

We know that for a State like Byelorussia the transition to non-nuclear status is a complex problem because of the current European military, strategic and political situation, especially taking account of Byelorussia's geographical location.

Achieving our goals will have a bearing on the strategic interests of many sides and requires a responsible and prudent approach. The Byelorussian SSR intends fully to adopt such an approach and in taking steps to achieve those goals will be guided by the principle of not violating anyone's legitimate security interests or the stability of the region as a whole.

We intend to move towards the attainment of our goals in a gradual, step-by-step way. We have already taken one of the first steps, and it has met with a positive international response: in August-September this year, for the first time Byelorussia took part, as an observer, in the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

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The security of the Byelorussian SSR is directly linked to that of Europe as a whole, and we are of the view that the establishment of a nuclear-free zone on the Republic's territory must be an integral part of the process of improving the situation on the European continent and that this will be fully possible when the necessary conditions are met.

Today, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Byelorussia, Mr. P. Kravchenko, is making a statement before the General Assembly in which he is proposing the eventual creation of a nuclear-free zone composed of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Baltic Republics; if they so desire, other neighbouring Central European countries could join as well. That initiative builds upon the initiative of the USSR to convert the Baltic Sea into a nuclear-free zone and upon the proposals made by some Central European States that zones of reduced military activity be established in their region.

No less complicated - or perhaps more so - is the problem of neutrality. Byelorussia is a sovereign State member of a militarily important federation of States, the USSR, which in turn is a member of a political and military alliance now under transformation, the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

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In this connection, in view of the military-political realities that still exist in the European and global contexts, Byelorussia considers that its acquisition of neutral status, a goal proclaimed in its Declaration, is a long-term goal. We believe in the real possibility of attaining it in the course of constructing a common European home, all-European structures and reliable security in a wider context, which will erode the need to preserve military-political alliances.

The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is striving to bring about the changes I have mentioned, and is prepared to make an active contribution to all levels - multilateral, regional and bilateral - of the efforts to that end. The desire of the Byelorussian people for a lasting peace, a desire motivated by history, is now complemented by new factors.

We view with special satisfaction and interest in this connection the positive developments in the United States-Soviet strategic arms reduction talks and in the Vienna negotiations on reducing armed forces and aramaments in Europe as well as on confidence- and security-building measures on our continent. There is every reason to believe that in the very near future we shall see a successful conclusion of the work of those forums. We expect that this important historical landmark will immediately be followed by a new stage of negotiations, on the further reduction of strategic offensive arms, on strategic stability, on the further reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe and on reductions in tactical nuclear weapons.

Although it is vitally interested in a radical reduction of troops and armaments in Europe, Byelorussia faces real new problems in accommodating in its territory a large number of the troops being withdrawn from Europe, in settling a huge number of demobilized personnel and in providing work for them. The task is

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made all the more difficult by the fact that areas fit for living in have been sharply reduced as a result of the Chernobyl tragedy. The population of the Republic feels some unease about the situation, and the Parliament is beginning serious consideration of the problem. Thus Byelorussia has already come face to face with a number of acute problems of conversion.

Our delegation wishes once again to stress, as it has done in previous years, that practical steps to bring about genuine disarmament will become more feasible and consistent - and, most important, irreversible - if States seriously cultivate the ideas of strictly defensive military doctrines and structures of armed forces, and if they widely apply in practice the principle of reasonable defence sufficiency. We do not underestimate, but, on the contrary, emphasize the role of practical steps, which pave the way for consistent disarmament.

In this connection, we welcome the fact that an international seminar on military defensive doctrines was held in Vienna early this year and that a meaningful discussion of the subject took place. There is already a serious need to start regular discussions on this matter. That is why our delegation has been emphasizing in the General Assembly for a number of years the need to start practical consideration, in United Nations organs and elsewhere, of the criteria and parameters for strictly defensive military doctrines and structures. Today we again propose that real moves in that direction be made and that for those purposes a United Nations study be carried out on defensive military concepts and structures of armed forces.

In speaking of defensive military concepts, we must mention the core issue, the key to many other military problems: the fact that it is time to transform the basis of the strategic equation, which is doctrines on the use of nuclear weapons. In the new circumstances, keeping open the possibility of the first use of nuclear

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weapons means dangerously delaying the emergence of a solid foundation for security. We are pleased that at a recent meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Council in London the first steps in the right direction were taken. We hope that they will be developed to correspond to the new foundation of security that is growing in Europe.

Sizeable reductions of armed forces on the European continent, followed by the rebuilding of the remaining forces in a way that will preclude their use for sudden, large-scale offensive action, and transforming strategic military doctrines will, we believe, provide the basis of conditions favourable to the realization of the goal of a non-nuclear, neutral status for the Byelorussian SSR.

Byelorussia naturally has a special interest in the carrying out of existing proposals to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions of Europe and the world. We believe that the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones deserves to become an item on the new agenda of the Disarmament Commission. We hope that that proposal will be seriously considered during the consultations on that matter.

For many years the United Nations has been looking for openings to play its central role in disarmament. The best potential for that is to be found where, in contrast to the bilateral sphere, there are unique opportunities for specifically multilateral, universal efforts. They concern, in particular, war-prevention measures and measures to bring about the non-proliferation of the most dangerous types of weapons, where the joint efforts of the widest possible circle of States are required.

In this context, we again urge that practical efforts be begun to translate into reality the well-known proposals, including those of the Secretary-General, to establish a multilateral centre for the prevention of nuclear and military danger, and in the long run to establish a whole system of such centres, including regional

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ones. With the assistance of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Secretary-General could look into the practical steps needed to establish a centre, whose functioning would make it possible to achieve the transition from preventive diplomacy, and which should become the basic instrument for maintaining peace in a world free of wars and violence. The units of the Secretariat that are already dealing with conflict analysis and forecasting could be usefully involved in the work of the centre. The recent United Kingdom proposal to establish a centre for information and advice on regional disarmament also deserves to be studied. It seems that ideas underlying the proposals on the centres I have mentioned are quite close.

The special responsibility of the nuclear Powers for the prevention of war, together with nuclear disarmament, could be fulfilled through the conclusion of agreements between them on measures to decrease the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war.

The problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the technology for their production, is becoming more and more acute. The General Assembly must, without delay, give the most careful attention to the problem, because of the growing technological and economic capabilities of States, the existing and emerging hot-beds of regional tension and conflict and the urge to commit aggression, as is clearly shown by the situation in the Persian Gulf.

In the circumstances, a comprehensive approach to non-proliferation seems most promising. A consistent combination of such an approach with genuine disarmament measures would mean a real reduction in nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

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Naturally, the concept of non-proliferation is devoid of a single-dimension simplicity. Nevertheless, the course of events spells out the necessity to lay aside already formed stereotypes and, having in mind the real state of affairs, to discuss in the United Nations the possibility of creating an international mechanism to prevent the proliferation of dangerous modern weapons and the technology to produce them.

As we see it the establishment of zones free of certain types of weapons might be one way of ensuring non-proliferation, in practice, at certain geographical levels. In this light the Byelorussian SSR considers it useful and important to build on the initiative of Egypt concerning the elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Of relevance to the limitation of nuclear weapons is the concept of ending the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. Such a prohibition would constitute a short cut, a radical way of eliminating nuclear weapons. At the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly the Byelorussian SSR co-sponsored for the first time the draft resolution on this subject that had for some years been sponsored by the delegation of Canada. In our view it would be useful this year to include in the draft resolution, along with the appeal for the earliest elaboration of an international agreement on the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapon purposes, a call for the IAEA to consider the problem of the non-use for military purposes of nuclear explosives released in the course of disarmament. Many countries have repeatedly called for such a step.

The banning of nuclear explosions for testing purposes is a priority measure which would radically curtail the possibility of a nuclear-arms race and, in the longer run, the very existence of nuclear weapons. Byelorussia is convinced that it is necessary to explore all ways and means which could lead to the achievement

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of that goal. In this connection we pronounce ourselves in favour of the resumption of the United States-Soviet talks on the limitation of nuclear testing. We support the possible transformation of the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty into a comprehensive treaty, and, in welcoming the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban by the Conference on Disarmament, we express our hope that it will start work in 1991 without delay and with the participation of all nuclear Powers.

The prohibition of chemical weapons is also a unique responsibility and opportunity for the United Nations since this goal requires universal participation. We are satisfied to note that the change in the climate of United States-Soviet relations has made possible a solid bilateral contribution to the attainment of this common goal. I have in mind the recent USSR-United States agreement on the cessation of the production of chemical weapons and on the elimination of the bulk of their stockpiles. We hope that the work that will be done at the 1991 session of the Conference on Disarmament will make possible a decisive breakthrough towards the completion of the convention banning chemical weapons.

The whole territory of Byelorussia was recently declared a zone of national ecological disaster as a result of the Chernobyl catastrophe. Naturally, we are very sensitive to all aspects of environmental protection. In this light we deem it necessary that the subject of ecology and armaments, which previously has not really been considered at the United Nations, should find proper reflection in the work of the First Committee. It is clearly high time we started thinking about the possibility of restricting certain military activities that are most harmful to ecological security. Also necessary is an international impetus towards taking the opportunity provided by arms reduction and conversion to eliminate or reorient the ecologically most harmful military types of production or to equip them with

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adequate means of environmental protection, using means gained through disarmament. Clearly, thought should be given to United Nations studies on the subject of armaments and ecology.

In conclusion, I would note that, guided by the need to shorten the general debate to allow more time for work on the draft resolutions, our delegation has not spoken on a number of disarmament problems that are of interest to us. We would point out that the views and suggestions of the Byelorussian SSR on such questions as openness and objective information on military matters, conversion of military resources, regional disarmament, limitation of international arms supplies, confidence-building measures and some other matters are set out in a number of letters to the Secretary-General. Interested delegations will be able to acquaint themselves with those views in the documents of the General Assembly and the First Committee. We hope others will follow our example.

My delegation intends to make one more statement in the debate, on the question of the impact of science and technology on international security.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
14th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 23 October 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. ADNAN (Malaysia): I am pleased, Sir, to convey to you my warmest personal congratulations, and also those of my delegation, on your unanimous election as Chairman of this important Committee. You represent a country with which Malaysia has always had warm and friendly relations. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

Since the signing of the Charter on 26 June 1945, the United Nations has provided a focal point for the international community in its efforts to promote the maintenance of international peace and security through co-operation, the peaceful settlement of disputes and disarmament. By its very existence, disarmament has proven a major element of general security. It was only days after the signing of the Charter that the world entered the atomic age. That event confronted the United Nations with unprecedented problems of world-wide dimensions. However, the Organization reacted promptly to the new turn of events, which was bound to give the need for disarmament greater urgency and an enhanced place in the sphere of international politics and security.

The first plenary meeting of the General Assembly was held on 10 January 1946. The following day, the First Committee met for the first time, and the single disarmament item on its agenda, an item of transcendent importance, was entitled "Resolution regarding the establishment of a commission to deal with the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy and other related matters". The very first resolution of the General Assembly, resolution 1 (I) of 24 January 1946, dealt with the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy.

(Mr. Adnan, Malaysia)

The continuing process that began in January 1946 has made the First Committee the depository of vast collective expertise in the field of disarmament. Over the years the Committee has never failed to identify problems as they develop and to make appropriate recommendations for their solution. Through the General Assembly it has been a source of recommendations and directives to Member States, other deliberative disarmament bodies including the Disarmament Commission and various negotiating bodies, and the Conference on Disarmament. This concept of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament is based on a recognition of the fact that disarmament, in the nuclear age, stands at the heart of any long-term solution to the problem of maintaining international peace and security. As the General Assembly recognized at its 1978 special session on disarmament, existing stockpiles of weapons, in particular nuclear weapons, the constant build-up of arms and armed forces, and the endless competition for qualitative superiority pose incalculable threats to peace and, indeed, to the very survival of mankind. Hence, Malaysia continues to believe that it is imperative that international peace and security be sought through arms reduction, both within the framework of the United Nations, where all Member States can play an active role, and on a unilateral, bilateral or regional basis, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

During the past two years, and particularly in recent months, we have witnessed numerous and varied developments on the political and security levels. We have seen a transformation in East-West relations in the form of movement towards dialogue, coexistence and co-operation. While we laud this more positive phase in East-West relations, it is unfortunate that the process has not contributed much to the multilateral disarmament process. We therefore urge the parties concerned fully to exploit the forums for potential multilateral

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negotiations, particularly the Conference on Disarmament, in order to expedite the realization of a global and comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Indeed, the rapid changes in the political climate should give us the impetus to create more favourable conditions for seeking universal agreement on the prevention of nuclear war. All wars, whether nuclear or conventional, should be prevented. A nuclear war should never be unleashed. We hold the very strong view that while the nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for preventing nuclear war all nations have a vital interest in the negotiation of measures for the prevention of such a nuclear war. Taking into account the uniquely destructive power of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic consequences a nuclear war would have for mankind, we believe it neither legitimate nor justifiable to invoke the United Nations Charter in an attempt to justify the use of nuclear weapons in exercise of the right of self-defence against conventional armed attack. We consider that the belief in the maintenance of world peace through nuclear deterrence is the most dangerous fallacy that ever existed. Pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited.

(Mr. Adnan, Malaysia)

Malaysia believes that comprehensive nuclear disarmament can be realized only if there is agreement on a comprehensive test ban. It is regrettable that, despite the recent upturn in the world political climate, there has been no let-up in the qualitative improvement in nuclear weapons. Malaysia therefore holds the view that the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban is an indispensable step towards nuclear disarmament and is of the highest priority, since it would stem both the qualitative sophistication of existing nuclear arsenals and the horizontal proliferation which would otherwise inevitably ensue. A step-by-step or gradual approach to the elimination of nuclear-weapons tests would not halt the modernization of nuclear weapons, but, rather, would legitimize the holding of such tests.

Malaysia therefore welcomes the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee under agenda item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban", by the Conference on Disarmament on 17 July 1990. We also note the decision of the Conference to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee at the beginning of the 1991 session, and we express the great hope that the re-established Ad Hoc Committee will lead to urgent concrete negotiations towards a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

My delegation would like to reaffirm its conviction of the paramount need for urgent multilateral negotiations on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament through the adoption of concrete measures leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The negotiations on nuclear disarmament are of vital interest to us, because the existence of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of a handful of States and the quantitative and qualitative development of those weapons directly jeopardize the security of both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. Though the prime responsibility for nuclear disarmament lies with the major nuclear-weapon States, all other States have their respective roles to play and must also take part in efforts to eliminate the nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Adnan, Malaysia)

To deny to the non-nuclear-weapon States the right to participate in the elaboration of nuclear disarmament measures would be morally indefensible, as well as legally incorrect. Given the interdependent and multifaceted nature of the security and threat perceptions, it is axiomatic that those issues should be addressed multilaterally.

Another matter of concern to my delegation is the expansion and modernization of naval forces by some States. This expansion, combined with the increased sophistication of sea-based weapons systems, the deployment at sea of nuclear weapons, both strategic and tactical, and the introduction of nuclear-powered submarines in different regions of the world, has given an alarming capability to the navies of a few such States. Since naval forces are an integral part of overall military structures, they should not be excluded from disarmament efforts. The widespread naval activities of nuclear-weapon Powers are a source of concern, since the mobility of naval forces allows for flexible and rapid deployment. My delegation wishes to express its satisfaction over the deliberations on naval armaments and disarmament that have taken place within the framework of the Disarmament Commission.

My delegation would like to reaffirm its abhorrence of the use of chemical weapons in regional conflicts and the proliferation of such horrendous weapons of mass destruction. Malaysia again joins in the demand of the international community for the elimination of such inhuman weapons through the conclusion of a comprehensive chemical-weapons convention. We are encouraged by the agreement in June between the United States and the Soviet Union to destroy their chemical-weapons stocks.

As an observer at the meetings of the Conference on Disarmament, we continue to monitor closely the progress of the negotiations on the projected multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production

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and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. While we take note of the progress thus far, we are also concerned over the pace of negotiations and the very fact that time is against the negotiators. We would urge the parties concerned to show greater political will in order to remove the remaining obstacles, so as to make possible the early conclusion of the convention. Unilateral and bilateral measures, however welcome, are only temporary in nature and limited in their scope.

Malaysia continues to subscribe to the view that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and should therefore be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, to promote scientific, economic and social development that would benefit all countries. We believe that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, can contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and take immediate measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international co-operation and understanding.

The time has come to abandon the use of force in international relations and to seek security in disarmament. There can be no real disarmament unless the basic principle of the Charter, enjoining Member States to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force, is firmly upheld. In a world where States do not feel bound, both individually and collectively, by that principle, the search for disarmament is not likely to bear fruit. Thus, if the First Committee is to be the key organ of the General Assembly on disarmament matters, it must also strongly sustain the Charter's rules on the non-use of force in international relations. The Committee should never lose sight of the fact that the role of the United Nations in disarmament is inseparable from the role of the

(Mr. Adnan, Malaysia)

United Nations in world affairs. It is of crucial importance for the cause of disarmament that the Organization should be used effectively as an instrument of world peace.

Mr. PENNANEACH (Togo) (interpretation from French): Competence, a sense of moderation and diplomatic skill are, in my delegation's view, the personal qualities that have won for you, Mr. Chairman, the unanimous backing of the members of the First Committee in your guidance of our work. That consensus is also undoubtedly the result of the deep faith of your country, Nepal, in the promotion of peace, international security and disarmament as factors in human progress. Therefore, Sir, it is a pleasure for me to extend to you my warm congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to assure you of the close co-operation of the Togolese delegation as you carry out your important functions.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

I should also like to extend my congratulations and wishes for success to the other members of the Bureau.

For some time now we have been witnessing an acceleration of history that surpasses science fiction and could never have been predicted.

It is as though we were emerging from a long night of lethargy and hesitation to find ourselves entering a world in which the virtues of dialogue and concertation and the ideals of peace, solidarity and co-operation will reign supreme. The spectacular upsets we have witnessed are less conducive to blissful euphoria than to a lucid vision of our world's future. We are faced with a fundamental question: how may we derive the greatest benefit from these profound changes so as appropriately to meet the remaining challenges and new emerging demands, and build a new world order in which all nations, large and small, rich and poor, can live in full prosperity?

Contrary to the hasty simplifications of ideological hindsight that have emerged of late, the end of the cold war does not mark the victory of one camp over another, but rather the triumph of reason and the noble principles, ideals and objectives of the United Nations. This Organization has always sought to be the embodiment of the most noble and sacred aspirations of the peoples we represent.

Today, more than ever before, it is urgently necessary consistently to meet the new needs for the maintenance of peace throughout the world: first, by making rational use of the present political atmosphere of understanding and co-operation between East and West to remove the obstacles to the starting-up or acceleration of efforts at arms limitation and disarmament and by re-orienting security policies towards defence; secondly, by revitalizing the machinery for the collective security provided for by the Charter by assuring the primacy of law and continued

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and effective use of the United Nations enormous potential for action in the settlement and prevention of conflicts; thirdly, by the adoption of energetic measures to strengthen the central role of the United Nations in disarmament so as to revitalize and expand the multilateral process of disarmament; and, fourthly, by ensuring the equitable distribution of peace dividends since it has become even clearer that we cannot build a world of genuine peace if we continue to maintain inequality and human degradation.

The recent developments in efforts at arms limitation and disarmament oblige us to act with prudent optimism and increased vigilance. One of the benefits of the continued rapprochement between the two super-Powers is that it gives rise to consistent initiatives which flow from their major responsibility in the field of disarmament.

In this regard we especially welcome the respect for commitments undertaken under the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, the INF Treaty; the signing of the verification Protocols of the Treaty of 1974 on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapons Tests and the 1976 Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, and the readiness of the two parties to ratify those Treaties; the determination of the two super-Powers to pursue their negotiations to conclude an agreement for a 50 per cent reduction in their strategic nuclear arsenals as well as to embark on negotiations likely to produce other reductions; and the agreement, concluded in June 1990, for the destruction of stocks of chemical weapons and a halt to the production of such weapons.

In pursuit of their disarmament efforts, the United States and the Soviet Union should promote dynamic interaction between their bilateral and multilateral negotiations, in particular as they relate to the future international convention on a total ban on chemical weapons, and on nuclear tests.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

The two countries should also attach particular importance to the establishment of conditions conducive to the expansion of nuclear disarmament negotiations to the other nuclear Powers, and to the inscription of naval disarmament on the agenda of multilateral negotiations. The arms race in space also should be dealt with appropriately.

It is encouraging to note the progress made in the two series of negotiations conducted within the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), in particular for a substantive and balanced reduction of conventional forces in Europe and the drawing up of new measures designed to increase confidence among States.

My delegation welcomes the decision taken by the member States of the CSCE to convene a summit of Heads of State and Government in Paris, and it hopes that that important meeting will foreshadow the establishment of a new partnership based on stability, security and co-operation in Europe that hence serves the cause of peace and international security.

Only then will the Helsinki process strengthened by the Stockholm stage, go down in history as an outstanding example and a useful frame of reference for efforts at disarmament and the drawing up of confidence-building measures, in particular at the regional level.

To date, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has proved an effective instrument for the prevention, or at least the significant slowing-down, of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and is therefore a significant contribution to the maintenance of peace and international security.

The in-depth constructive dialogue that has resulted from the Fourth Review Conference of the NPT is commensurate with the commitment of all States parties to demonstrate scrupulous respect for the obligations undertaken, to strengthen the

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

authority and the effectiveness of the Treaty and thus to consolidate the nuclear-weapons non-proliferation régime.

The understanding reached on many important questions such as security guarantees, the safeguards system and the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be carefully preserved and used in the future.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

The relative failure of this Fourth Review Conference reflects the very widespread concern at the fact that the continuation of nuclear tests is a factor in accelerating the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. Moreover, that set-back is a useful warning that the Charter should not be applied in a selective and discriminatory manner. In any case, extention of the non-proliferation Treaty should not be a mere formality but rather the result of a renewed commitment to the adoption of urgent and specific measures to put an end to the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons.

My country, which has always demonstrated its dedication to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to nuclear disarmament, will very soon sign the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as the Protocol. The strengthening of the non-proliferation régime that we all ardently wish to see demands effective support for efforts and initiatives to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In this regard it is important to ensure the application of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. The objective of this Declaration is compromised by South Africa's acquisition of a nuclear-weapon capability. Various types of pressure on the racist régime of South Africa should therefore be stepped up to make it accede unconditionally to the non-proliferation Treaty and submit all its nuclear installations to the IAEA safeguards.

The forthcoming amendment Conference of the partial test-ban Treaty will be another significant stage in the efforts to achieve a comprehensive ban on such tests and thereby the end of the nuclear-arms race. By associating itself with the initiative of this Conference my country intends to make its contribution to resolution of the deadlock that for several years now has existed in the work of the Conference on Disarmament on the nuclear-test ban. It is important that,

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thanks to the improvement in the international political atmosphere, and the lessons learned from the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, the amendment Conference should be crowned with success.

Where are we going? We all know that, despite the progress that has been made in the area of arms limitation, the great Powers - the major players in the hellish game of the arms race - have in their arms stockpiles the wherewithal to incinerate our planet several times over. Hence the English expression "overkill".

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is not in the interests of mankind. It is very likely that, sooner or later, it will lead to a horrendous war sparked by a psychopathic tyrant. Thus, on the one hand, the cost of nuclear war is such that the game is not worth the candle and, on the other hand, there is a real danger of seeing mankind self-destruct. Nuclear war would thus lead to collective suicide, for, purely within the area of military strategy, man, through the combination of nuclear power and missile technology, has reeled dizzyingly far beyond the limits of the necessary and the reasonable. The deplorable Chernobyl accident demonstrated to the world the completely illusory nature of the notion that a defensive strategy could spare millions of civilian lives.

The revival of the prestige and effectiveness of the United Nations has resulted from a better grasp of the Organization's enormous potential for action to uphold the primacy of law and to prevent and settle conflicts. While consecrating the validity and the justice of the principles and purposes embodied in the Charter, the universal Organization's recent successes in the settlement of conflicts point to the imperative need to make full use of the machinery for collective security.

Significant, in this regard, are the consistency and solidarity demonstrated by the Security Council in its handling of the Gulf crisis. For the sake of the credibility, authority and effectiveness of the Council, it is essential that this

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positive and responsible attitude be maintained without discrimination and that it serve as a vehicle for the peaceful resolution of continuing regional conflicts. The extinguishing of hotbeds of tension will be a valuable encouragement to those engaged in efforts towards regional disarmament and to those trying to relaunch policies of economic development in the countries involved.

The invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq are a reminder of the fragility of peace, and draw attention to the urgent need to control international arms transfers, especially to those regions that already have a heavy concentration of weapons and are subject to tensions.

Pending a general agreement on disarmament, agreement must be reached on the limitation of arms sales. It is high time that the logic of profit and the strategic calculations of individuals yielded to a global vision of the interests of regional and world security. My delegation supports the proposal to establish at the United Nations an international register of international arms transfers, in so far as that would be likely to promote openness and transparency and, therefore, to dispel distrust and suspicion.

The relative dynamism of bilateral negotiations in the disarmament field should not make us lose sight of the great importance of the multilateral aspect of disarmament. The present context of increased confidence in the universal Organization presents us with an opportunity to adopt practical measures to strengthen its pivotal role in the disarmament field. So far as disarmament is concerned, there can be no monopoly; security will be either global or non-existent and, therefore, disarmament will be either global or non-existent.

The consensus achieved at the last session of the Disarmament Commission on four important issues - the nuclear capability of South Africa; conventional disarmament; the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade; and the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field - is a positive development

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with regard to the stalemate of all types that has characterized consideration of those issues since they first appeared on the agenda several years ago.

The rationalization of the work of this Committee should open the way to new consensus, which should facilitate the Committee's task and lay the ground for multilateral negotiations.

As the single multilateral negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament has an extremely important role to play in meeting Member States' legitimate expectations in the disarmament field.

With regard to the growing concern that is being voiced about nuclear tests and the need for a total ban on such tests, the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee presents a good opportunity to launch a genuine negotiating process.

It is important that, among other things, efforts to rationalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament should allow for more effective and active participation by Member States and ensure that their contributions to the debates are taken into account.

Finally, if the improvement in the international political atmosphere is to be reflected more clearly, and the need for efficiency met, the efforts at rationalizing the work of the First Committee should proceed from a real political desire for constructive dialogue and rapprochement, as well as from respect for the legitimate and vital interests of States or groups of States.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

My delegation assures you, Mr. Chairman, of its full support as you carry out this sensitive but very necessary rationalization exercise.

It is fitting that we pay a tribute here to the very useful work of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, under the highly competent leadership of Mr. Yasuki Akashi and with the dedicated assistance of his staff. The significant work carried out and the programme of work laid down for 1991 clearly show that the Department is determined to do its utmost to fulfil its obligations and, above all, to make the changes necessitated by the strengthened role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. If the Department for Disarmament Affairs is to continue to be one of the critical means for strengthening the role of the United Nations, it is absolutely indispensable that it have adequate human, material and financial resources.

It is also important to strengthen support for the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace, Disarmament and Development and, thereby, the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field.

My Government welcomes the establishment of the post of Director of the Lomé Centre and the appointment of a new Director. In keeping with General Assembly resolution 44/117 F of 15 December 1989, such decisions are likely to give fresh impetus to the operation of the Centre, which continues to demonstrate its ability to promote confidence-building measures at the regional African level. My country, which has the honour of acting as host to the Centre, will continue to contribute to the Centre's operation to the extent of its possibilities. In order for the Centre to carry out its mandate it must have available the necessary financial and material resources to better programme its activities. A new appeal for generous contributions to the Centre must therefore be addressed to those Member States that have not yet responded.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

At present, under the World Disarmament Campaign the regional Centres could usefully serve as units for raising public awareness of the changes that have taken place in international political relations and their impact on disarmament efforts and initiatives. The Centres should be better known; they should also disseminate throughout their regions any useful information likely to mobilize the world for total disarmament.

The improvement in East-West relations will not automatically lead to an improvement in the North-South dialogue. In this connection it is important to make certain that the end of East-West confrontation does not give rise to a North-South political and economic confrontation fed by the existing imbalances in international economic relations.

The equal distribution of peace dividends is another basic requirement in any effort to establish a new world order. It requires that specific attention be given to eliminating non-military threats to security. In the present case, that means that appropriate economic and political solutions must be found to the possible instability - and indeed breakdown - that threatens national sovereignty, social cohesiveness, the championing of human rights and the building of democratic societies, as a result of massive foreign debt, poverty, misery and environmental destruction in the developing countries.

Neither the disappearance of the iron curtain nor the partial progress made in the field of disarmament should allow us to forget the billions of human beings who are still living in abject poverty or the growing gap between North and South. The international community must do all in its power to narrow that gap so as to avoid the total marginalization of the poor countries. Détente must become universal - in other words, it must go beyond East-West relations and encompass North-South relations. Here, we refer to the pressing need to implement the

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Programme of Action of the International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development.

In this connection I should like to emphasize that, based on available statistical data, a 10 per cent reduction in the annual military budgets of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the United States of America would allow for a doubling of the present amount - some $48 billion - of public development assistance supplied by countries of the West to the developing countries.

In a world in which ideological confrontation has ended, we find ourselves today more than ever before faced with historic opportunities to build a society of man like the one envisaged by the founding fathers of the world Organization, a world in which respect for law leads to peace, a world in which those who want peace strive for it, a world in which the voice of weapons yields to the voice of negotiations and in which selfishness gives way to generosity, a world in which the spirit of conquest succumbs to love and solidarity.

Together, we must seize the opportunities offered by the present situation to embark upon an irreversible process to eradicate violence and injustice and to build for the third millenium a world in which peace and co-operation will be impregnable fortresses under whose protection mankind will enjoy equally shared prosperity. Only then shall we be able to make our planet a place of freedom and justice in which the unity of nations will be realized in full equality.

With that in mind, the pursuit and intensification of efforts and initiatives towards arms limitation and disarmament must proceed on the basis of a broader set of bilateral, regional and multilateral approaches and of the progressive elimination of both military and non-military threats to security.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

World peace, still so fragile today, must, if it is to be strengthened in a lasting way, needs a more sustained collective effort to extinguish all hotbeds of tension and to discourage and forestall regional hegemonic ambitions, in order finally to ensure the primacy of law, dialogue and concerted action, to establish the confidence needed for the elimination of means of mass destruction and for the substantive reduction of levels of armaments and, lastly, to strengthen international economic co-operation. For it is indeed an insult to human dignity to see a great part of the world's resources squandered on ends as futile as the arms race.

Since the stakes are so high, let us begin here and now by taking steps to promote the dawning of a new world order that is truly consonant with the noble ideals governing our Organization.

Mr. KORUTURK (Turkey): I should like to express the sincere congratulations of my delegation to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that your well-known wisdom and leadership, so ably demonstrated during your tenure as President of the Security Council, will guide the Committee's work through this session. I am also pleased to convey my delegation's congratulations to the other officers of the Committee.

In the past year, there have been dramatic changes in the political landscape of Europe that have deeply affected East-West relations. The increasingly positive trend in that relationship that was already discernible at the last session of the First Committee has been accentuated. Those momentous political changes were reflected in the Declaration issued in London last July by the summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That Declaration was widely reported as marking the end of the cold war.

The improvement of the political climate has given rise to significant progress in arms control, particularly in Europe, and has influenced the global disarmament process in a positive way. The successful implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - which eliminates a whole class of nuclear weapons, is of great significance in that respect. The conclusion of an agreement in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) - possibly before the end of this year, as stated by the United States and the Soviet Union - which is expected to provide substantive reductions in the strategic nuclear forces of the United States and the Soviet Union, will represent another major achievement in the field of nuclear disarmament. Moreover, we know that the United States of America and the Soviet Union have agreed to engage in consultations about further negotiations on matters of strategic balance after the START treaty is completed. Finally, negotiations on the reduction of short-range

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nuclear forces are expected to begin between the United States and the Soviet Union shortly following the conclusion of an agreement on conventional forces in Europe.

We support the endeavours of the United States and the Soviet Union in various fields of arms control and disarmament. We recognize that nuclear disarmament is only one aspect of a larger general issue. We view arms control and disarmament as an integrated process encompassing all the multiple components of the military balance. Since we are seeking enhanced global security, disarmament efforts in both the nuclear and the conventional fields are of the utmost importance.

The objective of the Negotiation on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), in which Turkey takes an active part, is to strengthen stability and security in Europe through the establishment of a stable and secure balance at lower levels of conventional armed forces, including conventional armament and equipment, to get rid of imbalances detrimental to stability and security, and to eliminate as a matter of priority conventional capabilities for launching surprise attacks and for initiating large-scale offensive action. We look forward to a successful conclusion to that Negotiation.

Turkey attaches equal importance to the second set of negotiations in Vienna, between the 34 States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) on confidence- and security-building measures, which it views as an indispensable corollary to disarmament efforts. Indeed, any progress in the field of arms limitation is directly linked to the security considerations and perceptions of the countries concerned. The establishment of an environment of confidence among those parties is highly significant. Confidence- and security-building measures have a primary role to play in securing more openness, transparency and comparability in military matters, with a view to eliminating uncertainty and insecurity. The negotiations on confidence-building measures aim

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to develop further the régime of the 1986 Stockholm Document and to open up new areas of confidence building in order to promote further transparency and openness in the military field, so as to contribute to further reducing the risk of military confrontation in Europe.

The fact that confidence-building measures are winning growing acceptance in the world is also shown by the commendable results already achieved on that issue in the framework of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. In that context, we welcome the publication by the Soviet Union of data on the numerical strength and the main types of armaments of the Soviet armed forces and the decision to submit this year, for the first time, figures on Soviet military expenditures in accordance with the United Nations Standardized Data Reporting System.

The timely completion of a CFE agreement for signature, as anticipated, at a CSCE summit meeting in Paris next month, together with the endorsement by that summit meeting of the progress in the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, will represent a vital part of a new concept of security relations in Europe, opening a new era of peace, security, stability and co-operation on a more solid and lasting basis.

The historical division of Europe may be finally overcome in accordance with the objectives of the Helsinki Final Act and through the CSCE process, which plays a fundamental role in the changes that we are witnessing. In that context, the unification of the German nation under the roof of a democratic and peaceful German State is bound to contribute to increased stability in Europe. Turkey believes that tangible progress in bilateral and regional arms control efforts will contribute to the advancement of the global arms control and disarmament process by improving the international climate.

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Against that background of momentous developments, the invasion and occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in August has caused world-wide indignation. The Security Council resolutions promptly adopted in the wake of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait have clearly demonstrated the firm determination of the United Nations to establish the principle that such acts, which are contrary to modern norms of international behaviour, shall not be tolerated. In the framework of the First Committee, we express the hope that the crisis may soon be brought to an end, without further undermining the prospects for the preservation and expansion of the existing momentum in the arms control and disarmament process.

The parties to the non-proliferation Treaty recently held their Fourth Review Conference in Geneva. We consider the non-proliferation Treaty one of the most crucial multilateral disarmament agreements yet concluded, with more than 140 States party to it. By reducing considerably the risk of nuclear war, the non-proliferation Treaty has contributed to a great extent to international security and arms control. Turkey, as a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, holds the view that strict adherence to Treaty provisions by nuclear and non-nuclear parties alike is of vital importance. We note that the great majority of parties at the Review Conference recognized the contribution of the non-proliferation Treaty to international peace and security. They confirmed their commitment to the Treaty and expressed support for its objectives. It is all the more important that the non-proliferation Treaty be maintained and that the non-proliferation régime be even further reinforced. To that end, we urge the States that have not yet adhered to the Treaty to be more forthcoming in that respect. We welcome the recent accession of Mozambique and Albania to the Treaty.

We note with satisfaction that during the period from 1985 to 1990, which was under review at that Conference, concrete and significant progress has been

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achieved in the field of disarmament. Those efforts that I dwelled upon earlier in my statement, such as the INF Treaty, the upcoming START agreement, and all other current or anticipated measures aimed at reducing or limiting nuclear forces can be construed as major steps in the implentation of article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty.

The Review Conference also reaffirmed the role of the Treaty in promoting international co-operation on nuclear safety and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and underlined the importance of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards in that regard.

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Although the Conference was not able to reach a final consensus on a concluding document, general agreement was obtained on most issues and much positive work was done at the Review Conference. In spite of the widely differing views on the issue of a comprehensive test ban, which blocked the way to a consensus on a final declaration by the Fourth Review Conference, we hope that the acknowledgement by the vast majority of States parties of the value of the non-proliferation Treaty on its own merits will eventually prevail and pave the way to a constructive process regarding the future extension of the Treaty beyond 1995.

Concerning the test-ban issue, we note with satisfaction that the Conference on Disarmament during its summer session finally succeeded, after several years, in agreeing on a mandate for an Ad Hoc Committee. We hope that this Committee, which has started its work under the chairmanship of Ambassador Donowaki of Japan, will be able to carry out substantive work on this issue. We wish to pay a tribute also to the Group of Scientific Experts, which has achieved considerable progress towards the establishment of a global network for the exchange of seismic data. That network will be an important element of the future verification system of a test-ban treaty.

In 1991 a Conference for the amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty will be held, on the initiative of a group of countries seeking to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive one. We understand that this initiative reflects the frustration of many States regarding the efforts deployed by the depositaries to end test explosions; we know that the immediate results of their efforts were not encouraging, especially regarding short-term measures. However, we wish to emphasize that such activity must not lead to unnecessary confrontation, but should be used for constructive discussion.

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On the other hand, it is understood that the signing by President Bush and President Gorbachev, at their June summit in Washington, of two important verification protocols - one to the 1974 threshold test-ban Treaty and one to the 1976 Treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions - constitutes a first step towards the banning of nuclear tests. We hope that future negotiations will envisage further limitations on the number and yield of nuclear test explosions and ultimately bring to an end all nuclear testing.

We endorse the possibility of achieving a total ban on nuclear tests, and we think that the best way to attain this ultimate goal is by means of adopting a gradual, realistic, step-by-step approach, as in the negotiations already embarked upon by the United States and the Soviet Union. We are of the opinion that further reductions in nuclear arsenals will also pave the way to a comprehensive test ban.

The elimination of chemical weapons from the arsenals of the world remains an urgent task for the international community. Turkey attaches the utmost importance to the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention globally banning the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons under effective verification. We note with disappointment that this year's negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament recorded only limited progress towards the completion of such a convention. This is a regrettable situation, particularly in view of the expectations generated by the 1989 Paris Conference, which reiterated the unanimous will of the international community to finalize a global convention banning chemical weapons. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to overcome the difficulties and resolve the outstanding issues, particularly those related to the complex domain of verification, so as to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible.

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In this context, we welcome the new agreement concluded in June between the United States and the Soviet Union on the destruction of a large part of their chemical-weapon stockpiles. We express the hope that such bilateral steps will encourage the negotiations on a future convention under way in Geneva, as they cannot be a substitute for the multilateral effort still necessary to reach a global ban.

Furthermore, Turkey attaches importance to the Third Review Conference of the parties to the biological weapons Convention, to be held in 1991, and hopes the Review Conference will offer an opportunity for strengthening the authority of the Convention.

As in previous years, the issue of nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain regions of the world has been included in the agenda of the First Committee. In that regard, Turkey continues to support the establishment of such nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where nuclear weapons do not exist, provided that all States concerned are willing to co-operate to this end on the basis of a freely concluded agreement. The creation of these zones should be conducive to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and should contribute to stability in the regions concerned.

Although arms control and other security-building endeavours have been largely limited to Europe and have been dealt with in an East-West context, there is a growing need to spread these efforts to other regions of the world in order to reduce tensions and enhance stability at the global level. We appreciate the pioneering work conducted by the United Nations in this respect and welcome commendable initiatives such as the regional meeting on confidence-building measures in Asia held recently in Kathmandu.

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Moreover, we welcome the useful research work conducted within the United Nations framework on various issues of the disarmament agenda by study groups and groups of experts. We should like also to commend the Department for Disarmament Affairs for its valuable and indispensable contribution and the skilful assistance it provides to various activities in the field of disarmament.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that we support the efforts towards rationalization of the work of the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission with a view to achieving more effective results on the basis of a leaner, more flexible and more streamlined agenda. Turkey stands ready to contribute in a constructive spirit to these efforts and to the proceedings of the Committee.

Mr. JANDL (Austria): The First Committee has before it the report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (A/45/42), which is to be considered under agenda item 60 (a). I should like to make a few comments on this report.

The 1990 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission can be regarded as a historic one. Never before has the Commission found itself in a position to finalize and adopt by consensus recommendations or sets of principles on four substantive agenda items. Furthermore, with regard to a fifth item, naval armaments and disarmament, the delegations participating in the deliberations reached a consensus on a comprehensive and substantive text reflecting their various positions. The discussions of a further issue, that of objective information on military matters, were in a preliminary stage and delegations held a very frank and, hence, fruitful exchange of views which will enhance the future treatment of the issue.

Thus, the Austrian delegation would like to congratulate the Commission's Chairman, Ambassador Sutresna of Indonesia, and the various Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies most cordially on their success.

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Let me now be a bit more specific on the results. In contrast to the rather impressive outcome of the whole session, little was achieved with regard to the item dealing with nuclear disarmament. That issue has been on the Commission's agenda since 1979. Two draft sets of recommendations were produced, but only a limited number of paragraphs commanded consensus. The rest of the two texts has remained in brackets over the years, indicating disagreement among delegations. During this year's session the two papers were rid of elements that seemed to be outdated because they obviously no longer corresponded to the realities of the early 1990s. The remainder, as seen in the Disarmament Commission's report, actually reflects the status of the discussion and the various, sometimes conflicting, points of view of delegations.

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Since it was agreed that consideration of the item in its present form should be regarded as terminated, one has to find a different approach to tackle the question of nuclear disarmament in the future. Basically, it is quite obvious that the Disarmament Commission has to deal with nuclear disarmament in one way or another, because nuclear weapons pose the most dangerous threat to mankind and because nuclear disarmament must therefore remain the highest priority in the international disarmament debate. The exercise in the Disarmament Commission has demonstrated, however, that it is not possible to discuss the comprehensive and complex issue of nuclear disarmament unspecifically or generally. There are too many aspects and elements; the scope of questions relating to nuclear weapons is too wide. Rather, we should try to identify some very specific and exactly defined aspects of the broad field of nuclear arms reduction. Otherwise, discussions will once again not lead to tangible results.

After long and intensive debates, the Disarmament Commission was able to adopt recommendations on the problem of the nuclear capability of South Africa and on the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and the text of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. For all three items it is true that a considerable number of States would have liked to see much stronger language and a firmer commitment to the substance of the respective items. Although the very fact that the Commission agreed on the texts is to be regarded as important, we should not forget the disappointment of many with respect to the contents.

Countries, like Austria, that show a particular interest in multilateralism and advocate a stronger United Nations position are not completely satisfied with the text of the recommendation on the role of our Organization and its various bodies. Since the adoption of the text in May this year much has happened in the international arena which has led to what some people have called the renaissance of

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the United Nations. Although the events I am referring to did not happen in disarmament-related bodies, we hope that they will also have their impact on arms control forums. We feel encouraged by some delegations' statements in the First Committee that have shown an increased interest in multilateral endeavours. We therefore sincerely hope that all this will enhance the role of the United Nations and its various disarmament organs.

The debates on naval armaments and disarmament in the Disarmament Commission led to the elaboration of a Chairman's paper which stands out for its high quality and expertise. Although not all Member States participated in the relevant deliberations, many well-founded points of view are reflected. Thus the paper gives a useful survey of an issue that will increasingly gain importance.

Conventional disarmament has always been of the utmost interest to the Austrian delegation. We therefore highly welcome the adoption of a set of recommendations on this matter. Due to different, often divergent, opinions of various countries which sometimes reflect specific regional conditions, the discussions were not easy. Considerable obstacles had to be overcome. The outcome of the Disarmament Commission's session is therefore encouraging, and we feel that questions of conventional disarmament should be looked at more closely within United Nations bodies, bearing in mind, of course, also its interaction with the question of weapons of mass destruction. During the debate on conventional disarmament it became obvious that this problem and its possible solution are closely linked to the respective situations prevailing in the various regions of the globe, and that the specifics of given regions or subregions have to be taken fully into account. Otherwise, genuine results cannot be achieved.

Austria had the great honour to preside over the consultation group that dealt with objective information on military matters. According to the compromise

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reached at the beginning of the substantive session, the item, being on the agenda for the first time, had to be addressed in a preliminary way, with no negotiation of a text. Accordingly, the issue was discussed in an open and frank manner, and the deliberations led to the reflection of the various opinions on the subject. Delegations brought forward, explained and compared their positions on objective information on military matters, both generally and in their various aspects. I should like to emphasize that this exchange of views was extremely fruitful, and of an outstanding intellectual level. It took place in a very productive and uncontroversial climate. Therefore, we feel that the deliberations form a very sound and solid basis for the future treatment of the item.

Looking ahead, we note that the Disarmament Commission will have a maximum of four agenda items on its working agenda for the 1991 substantive session. This was agreed upon in a reform package elaborated in the margins of last year's First Committee. The paper entitled "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission" (A/CN.10/137) contains a number of very specific measures designed to streamline the methods of work and therefore increase the Commission's effectiveness. Austria has always regarded the Commission as an extremely useful instrument, and has therefore always been interested in a substantive outcome of its endeavours. The reform adopted will certainly improve the way of dealing with the items, thereby increasing the chances of propitious results.

As members are aware, informal discussions under the aegis of the Commission's Chairman have been held during the past weeks and months and are being continued. The task of identifying four topics which enjoy the consent of everybody is very delicate and difficult. A number of proposals on the criteria that should govern the selection of the items have been put forward by some delegations; other delegations have already presented their ideas on concrete items. I shall not go

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into the details at this stage, but let me reflect some basic thoughts of my delegation on the composition of the Commission's working agenda for next year.

We fully subscribe to the idea that the agenda should have a broad basis, that it should strike a balance between the interests of various States or groups of States, and that the issues should be of global concern. Furthermore, duplication of the work of other disarmament bodies has to be avoided. The example of the item on nuclear disarmament, which I referred to earlier, has demonstrated that there is no prospect for items with too broad a scope. On the contrary, we think that the issues have to be exactly defined in order to provide the Commission with a specific mandate and in order to give delegations clear guidelines on what they should deliberate on.

According to the established compromise, objective information on military matters will be one of the agenda items for next year's session. After the solid background work done in May 1990 we hope that the deliberations will be fruitful and lead in the long run to a substantive set of principles or a recommendation on this important confidence- and security-building measure.

As I have already mentioned, one item dealing with nuclear disarmament has to be on the agenda. Obviously there is broad consensus on this. Informal consultations will have to identify a specific topic and to find a clear formulation of the item. Many interesting proposals have been made so far, and we think that delegations should be able to establish consensus on a particular formulation.

With regard to the third item, some delegations have proposed a topic dealing with the regional aspects of disarmament. As can be seen from recent events, regional situations can be of the utmost importance to all of us, since they have ramifications far beyond their immediate neighbourhood. The importance of regional

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questions in disarmament and security will increase and so will the need to address such matters. We have to take into particular account the vivid interaction between security and disarmament at the regional, subregional and global levels. We believe that arms-reduction efforts have to be pursued at the various levels and that they are of mutual influence. Thus regional disarmament steps interact with global measures and vice versa.

A set of basic guidelines or recommendations on the matter would, in the Austrian view, be a very useful document. The Disarmament Commission, being the deliberative body of the disarmament machinery, with universal membership, seems to be the adequate forum for this undertaking. Therefore, we strongly support the inclusion of a related item on next year's working agenda. The concrete formulation of this item should be identified in consultations between interested delegations.

With respect to the last, the fourth, item, many very interesting proposals have been presented. Among them we find several future-oriented subjects which are not yet treated in the various disarmament bodies, but which will gain increased importance in the future. We think that it would be more than adequate if the Disarmament Commission were to address particularly such forward-looking topics.

We note with special interest matters like the environmental aspects of armaments and disarmament, the question of conversion, or science and technology in its relation to security and disarmament. All of these possible items, and, of course, others which might be brought forward later, deserve our close attention, and should be carefully examined with regard to possible treatment in the framework of the Disarmament Commission. We certainly hope that consultations will soon lead to an agreement on one of these issues.

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It almost goes without saying that not every delegation can be completely and entirely satisfied with any composition of various items. Countries do have interests and opinions and, hence, legitimate preferences. This holds true in particular for such a sensitive matter as disarmament and international security. But we should not forget that general and complete disarmament should be the final goal of all our endeavours, in order to create a safer and more secure world.

That is why everybody has to give in a bit. It is obvious that some States will have to come a longer way than others; but, in the end, the selection of the items for next year's working agenda of the Disarmament Commission will be the outcome of a compromise. If all of us participate with good will and a co-operative spirit in the relevant consultations, we shall soon establish a reasonable compromise.

Let us not lose time. The earlier we know what the Disarmament Commission will do next year, the better we can prepare ourselves for our future task. As a representative of a country that has always shown a keen interest in the Disarmament Commission, I am firmly convinced that it is worth while.

Mr. AHSAN (Bangladesh): The Bangladesh delegation cannot but help feel a modicum of pride seeing you, Sir, in the Chair. It is not simply because you represent Nepal, a country with which we have the closest ties, but also because we know you to be a friend with vast diplomatic skills that lend our proceedings the certainty of success. Felicitations are also due to your colleagues in the Bureau who will doubtless render you any support you might require. We are heartened by the fact that we shall continue to be guided by the profound wisdom of Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi, and are also pleased that our astute Secretary, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, will, as before, assist us.

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

We meet against a matrix of heightened hope. The Cold War has receded into history. In this era of neo-détente, super-Power rapprochement has witnessed confrontation transformed into co-operation. Discord has turned into dialogue. Mutual understanding has led to increasing interactions. A beginning has been made towards real disarmament, settlement of regional conflicts, and a joint search for viable solutions to global problems.

The world has undergone radical changes in the past year. Eastern Europe has moved in a positive direction. The reunification of Germany has opened up the possibility of a whole new European architecture. The establishment of political pluralism and emphasis on market mechanism holds better prospects for wider opportunities for trade and investment. The declining influence of ideology on State policies is leading to greater tolerance for differing political, economic and social systems. The relationship between the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) now hold promise for a more durable and stable European security régime with disengagement of forces, reduced nuclear arsenals and cut-backs in conventional arms. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) appears to be advancing even further towards a new and innovative direction that could envisage a new security system for the whole of Europe.

There is, however, every reason for us to avoid a sense of complacency that might creep in if we are unwary. The emerging international security scene remains critically fragile. This has been demonstrated by the current sad events in the Gulf. It has brought into broad relief the instability and unpredictability of the world's shifting political, economic and security conditions. The situation is a crucial test of the confidence and viability of the rule of international law and global co-operation for the maintenance of peace.

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

The end of the cold war has marked the collapse in the global structure of two competing Power blocs. New centres of economic and political power with new variables and alignments can emerge with as yet uncertain consequences. The evolving scenario is not unmixed with danger for weaker nations. A major anxiety is that it might undermine the security interests of many developing countries either through regional hegemonism or marginalization.

Several dangers are inherent in this situation. The Gulf crisis highlighted the incongruity of a situation where one category of weapons of mass destruction - that is, chemical weapons - is being perceived as a deterrent to the not so covert nuclear arsenal of Israel. This leads us to the overall issue of the arms race and its dangers. Despite Treaty reductions, vast numbers of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons remain. The over-kill factor still defines the nature of the threat to human survival. The arms race continues to be characterized by terrifying statistics of wasteful costs. Over a trillion dollars are spent annually on means of destruction. This is a sad anomaly in the light of the painful fact brought out in the recent World Summit for Children that 40,000 infants die every day of hunger, malnutrition and disease.

Hopes for a peace dividend remain uncertain. Means to regulate conventional arms transfer are beset with local and regional implications. Many developing countries continue to strain their scarce resources for the purchase of highly sophisticated weaponry. Arms producers relentlessly pursue their trade despite the costs or threats to peace. Weaker countries find themselves in a situation where they must perforce strengthen their capacities to meet minimum defence needs. Existing differences are aggravated by expanding knowledge on weapons technology. The philosophy of non-proliferation continues to be threatened by the fact that the quantitative arms race is being overtaken by qualitative competition among the big

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

Powers. Super-Power détente, while reducing tension among major protagonists, might bring to the fore other differences that had been papered-over during the last four decades. Revival of dormant problems might sharpen the appetite of regional Powers for domination. There could arise, as indeed there has arisen, a tendency for the more powerful to try to re-draw established borders.

All this does not mean we must throw up our hands in despair. On the contrar . New situations bring new challenges requiring new response. We must gear ourselves to redouble our efforts in the cause of peace and stability. The United Nations has doubtless a grave responsibility in this. This is one forum where nearly all States participate in the debate on how to make the world more secure. Bangladesh reiterates its desire to take part in this activity and to do so constructively. With this in mind, I should like to state our position on some of the agenda items at hand.

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

My delegation believes that there should be adequate concentration on nuclear disarmament and that this subject should, indeed, have the highest priority. At the same time, we can ill afford to ignore the flip side of the coin. Attention should also be focused on measures for the limitation and reduction of conventional arms. Such measures must be pursued resolutely within the framework of progress towards general and complete disarmament. In this regard, the regional dimension must be emphasized.

For ourselves, we have rejected the nuclear alternative, as is demonstrated by our accession to the non-proliferation Treaty. We regret that the Fourth Review Conference, at its meeting in Geneva last month, was unable to reach agreement on a document. In Geneva, Bangladesh stressed the need for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be strengthened through commitments to positive and negative security assurances, standardized and tighter nuclear-export regulations, and more effective International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. We support the call for nuclear-free zones. As President Hussain Muhammad Ershad stated at a plenary meeting of the General Assembly, the establishment of nuclear-free zones, as well as zones of peace, is among measures integral to a non-proliferation régime. We see Israel's and South Africa's acquisition of a nuclear capability as a cause for grave concern.

Bangladesh believes that a comprehensive test-ban treaty would narrow the arms competition by rendering impossible the further development of nuclear weapons. Producers, if any, of first-generation fission weapons without testing would be unlikely to use them, for fear of effective reprisals. A consensus appears to exist among scientists that laboratory simulations are insufficient as a means of predicting the effects of more advanced nuclear weapons.

A comprehensive test ban could satisfy those on many fronts. It would please the increasing masses of the global population who are rapidly becoming aware of

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

the consequences of atmospheric pollution and the degradation of nature. Adequate security assurances to non-nuclear States would not only diminish their propensity to go nuclear but also buttress their sense of security. For these reasons Bangladesh is among the States that have requested a conference to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Technological advance has made today's conventional weapons increasingly sophisticated. Precision-guided munitions are able to hit exact targets at enormous distances. The differences between these and some low-yield nuclear weapons in terms of destructive power and "kill probability" are disappearing. My delegation therefore reiterates that the maintenance of conventional capabilities in excess of legitimate security requirements can have destabilizing ramifications for the region and the globe. We support - indeed, call for - arms reductions in a balanced and equitable manner so that, without genuine security needs being affected, stability is enhanced at lower military levels. Chemical weapons are horrendous instruments of destruction, and we hope soon to see an agreement banning them. However, any proposed measures ought not to constrain needlessly the nascent chemical industry in developing countries.

Bangladesh is deeply committed to the peaceful uses of the sea and its resources. We feel that naval build-up beyond perceived needs tends to spread apprehension and heighten suspicions. We therefore urge restraint in naval activities. The criteria for legitimate naval needs should be carefully formulated. Recognition should be given to the principle of weightage, with additional capability for weaker States. We agree that a multilateral agreement on the prevention of naval accidents is necessary. All these measures should be in harmony with, and not contradictory to, the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

It was our abiding commitment to peaceful maritime activities that led us to call for the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. How long must the proposed Colombo Conference remain an elusive goal? We urge the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to sink their differences and work towards our common purpose. We shall continue our search for a stable Indian Ocean régime that will be neutral, dimilitarized and denuclearized. Such a régime must be guaranteed through a collective security system so that great-Power withdrawal is not supplanted by any other form of domination that could imperil the security of the weaker littoral States.

For many developing countries, - our country included, the most crucial incentive in the field of disarmament is, of course, the link between disarmament and development. It is incongruous, indeed lamentable, that vast resources are channelled to purposes of destruction rather than towards rescuing millions from the morass of excruciatingly painful poverty.

In all this, as well as in the general area of disarmament, the United Nations must have a strengthened role. Recognition of this fact was underscored by States Members when they committed themselves to the Charter, which views the maintenance of peace and security as the principal purpose to which the United Nations devotes itself. Indeed, this purpose is to be achieved with the least possible diversion of the world's resources to the acquisition of armaments. The United Nations has an important contribution to make in encouraging agreements, as well as in the monitoring of compliance and verification. In this context, Bangladesh would be happy to play a role in the expanded Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, if called upon to do so.

(Mr. Ahsan, Bangladesh)

While on the subject, it would be remiss of me to fail to commend the activities of the three regional research centres. The one in Kathmandu, in which you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Akashi have been taking such a keen interest, has already done some very useful work. If properly equipped, it could go a long way in encouraging the confidence-building measures so badly needed in South Asia. As the first Secretary-General of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), I have to say that it has been my experience that a small step in confidence-building would be a giant stride in the maintenance of peace in that part of the world.

For as long as war and conflict are not eliminated, the promotion of peace and security will continue to demand our attention. We shall need to continue to focus on peace-making and peace-keeping. But there is a growing realization that there must now be appropriate concentration on peace-building. This should not be confined to containing violence or resolving issues; rather, it should include steps to create the conditions in which to eradicate the root cause of war and conflict. Removing poverty, tackling indebtedness, reversing environmental degradation, combating drug abuse, and generally improving the quality of life for all should also come within its focus.

As the representative of a least developed country, I tend to think that empty bellies are a greater threat to stability than are guns. The evidence of history will show that I do not err in that belief. Contentment, not conventions, is what in the ultimate analysis will contain chaos. Let us base our actions on this simple but incontrovertible truth.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.